

Crusader De-Tails

Part II

By GEORGE J. LETZTER

Drawings By CLARENCE E. DOXSTATER, USN

Since Part I of "Crusader De-Tails" appeared in the Summer 1962 JOURNAL (Vol 7, No. 2), many new squadrons have been equipped with the Crusader, others have changed their tail designs and, as is always the case when recording aircraft markings, some squadrons were not included in the original drawings due to lack of information.

Part II, here, attempts to record the many changes and additions which have come to light and to present a complete listing of operational Navy and Marine squadrons, plus specialized units, operating the Crusader as of the end of 1963. Beside the markings changes, the basic designation of the aircraft has been changed in compliance with a directive by the Department of Defense on current Aircraft Designations. The new model designations of Crusader aircraft are:

F8U-1	-	F-8A
F8U-1P	-	RF-8A
F8U-1E	-	F-8B
F8U-2	-	F-8C
F8U-2N	-	F-8D
F8U-2NE	-	F-8E
F8U-1T	-	TF-8A

Since March 1957, when the Crusader was first assigned to an operational squadron, VF-32, the various models of the aircraft have been continuously phased into operational use, and earlier models, F-8As, have recently been assigned to Reserve units, completing the cycle for Naval operational aircraft. This should not be construed to mean that the Crusader is now starting to be phased out of operational squadron service, but it merely follows the Navy's policy of assigning current operational types to its Reserve units.

The tail markings of the Crusader have continued to be very colorful, and with the addition of ventral fins on later F-8 models, the squadrons have extended their markings to this surface. Several of the drawings (on pages 106 and 107) show how these additional markings have been applied by various squadrons. For sheer beauty and dramatic effect, honors for the most colorful design must go to the VMF-312, "Checkerboard Squadron".

It has been noted that when Marine squadrons are assigned to overseas bases their colorful markings have been removed and just the basic code letters are carried on the tail surface. Also, when Marine squadrons are assigned to a Carrier Air Group, they adopt the Air Group tail letters for their deployment period (see VMF-251 drawings). This same procedure is followed by VFP squadrons when deployed with an Air Group (see VFP-62 drawing).

Some of the most colorful aircraft are those flown by the Air Group Commanders. In addition to the normal squadron color markings, the CO's aircraft usually shows the colors denoting all squadrons in the Air Group (see VF-51 and VF-191 drawings). One of the most unusual Crusader color schemes is an F-8A flown by VU-5. It is used for high speed tow target work and has a midnite blue fuselage, chrome yellow wings with red bands, and the fin is chrome yellow with a red rudder. Navy-Marine Reserve units equipped with the F-8A use standard Trainer markings on their planes, the entire vertical

tail surface and the outer wing panels, to the wing hinge line, being painted orange-red day-glo. Standard black tail letters denoting the base assigned are carried on the fin.

There seems to be no basic pattern for the changes in markings that the squadrons are constantly making. Some squadrons tend to simplify their markings by deleting a solid color background or removing a color stripe. Other squadrons are adding small designs or symbols and, in some cases, squadrons have changed over to a highly colorful and complex tail marking. It is useless to generalize on these markings, for all one need do is state a rule, and the next squadron design to appear will prove it false.

Following is a list of Navy and Marine squadrons and miscellaneous units flying the Crusader that have been recorded in Parts I and II of "Crusader De-Tails". For ease of reference: (*) indicates drawing in Part I, (**) indicates drawing in Part II, (***) indicates drawing changes, comparison to be made between Parts I & II.

NAVY

VFAW-3 *	VF-111 ***	VF-211 ***
VF-11 ***	VF-124 ***	VCP-61 *
VF-24 ***	VF-132 *	VFP-62 ***
VF-32 *	VF-141 **	VFP-63 ***
VF-33 **	VF-142 ***	VU-1 **
VF-51 ***	VF-154 *	VU-2 **
VF-62 ***	VF-162 **	VU-5 **
VF-84 *	VF-174 ***	VU-7 *
VF-91 ***	VF-191 ***	VX-3 **
VF-103 *	VF-194 **	VX-4 **

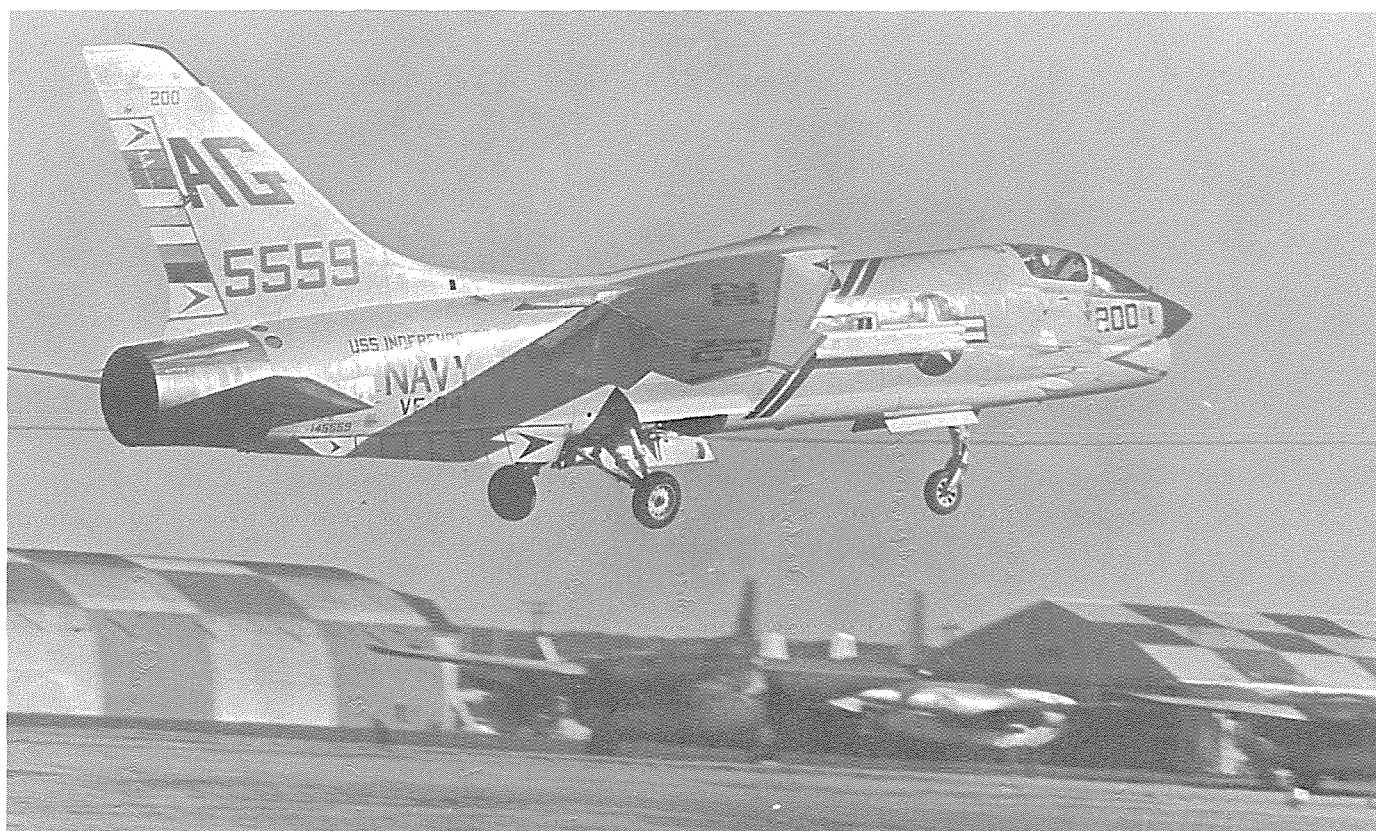
MARINES

VMF-122 *	VMF-312 ***	VMF-451 *
VMF-212 **	VMF-323 *	VMJ-1 *
VMF-232 *	VMF-333 *	VMCJ-2 *
VMF-235 *	VMF-334 ***	VMCJ-3 ***
VMF-251 ***		

MISC. UNITS

FAGU *	Weapon Test **	Project Bullet **
NATC ***	NATF **	Reserve **

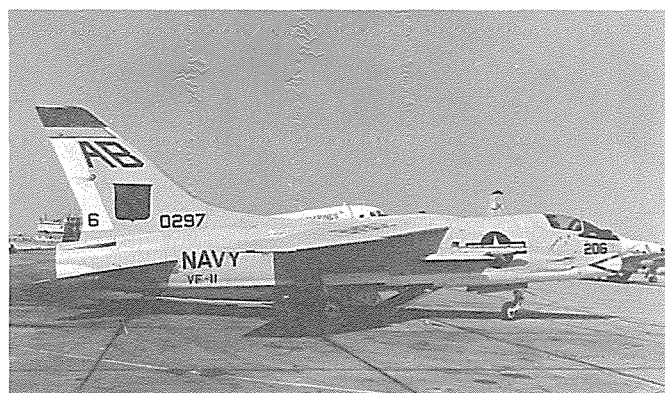
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS: I wish to express my appreciation to all the Members who have forwarded additional information and photos to me or the Editor for inclusion in this article. Special thanks go to Art Schoeni, Chance-Vought, for his continued interest and for the many valuable photos of the Crusader. In preparing the drawings for Part II, it was decided to include not only the squadron markings and color detail, but also the aircraft serial number and other details for added realism. Each of the drawings was made with reference to an actual aircraft. Full credit for this excellent set of drawings must go to "Doc" Doxstater who not only completed each of the drawings but, in several cases, went right out to the flight line to make a sketch on which to base his drawing. Another source of considerable aid was the publication: U.S. Navy, Naval Aviation News, Jan. '62 thru Jan. '64, U.S. Government Printing Office.



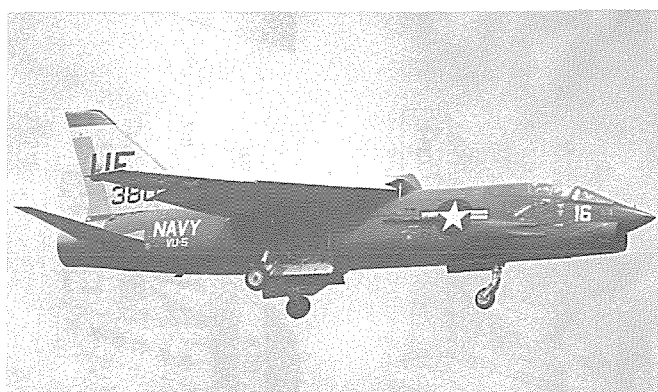
The Commanding Officer's Crusader, Air Group 8, with the rudder painted in the colors--red, blue, yellow, green, white, orange, black--of each squadron of the Air Group. (Photo - Art Schoeni, Chance Vought, Offl. USN)



Crusader RF-8A of VFP-63 aboard the USS Coral Sea in the Pacific. (Photo - Stephen P. Birdsall)



BuNo 150297, an F-8E Crusader of VF-11 bearing the famous insignia of The Red Rippers. (Photo - Art Schoeni)



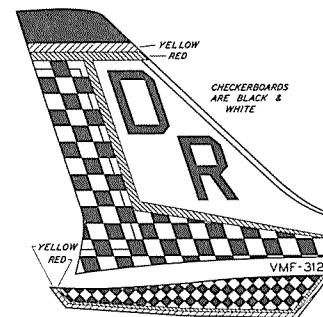
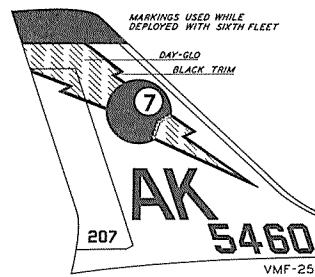
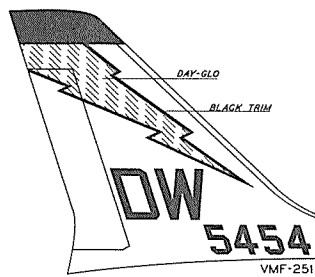
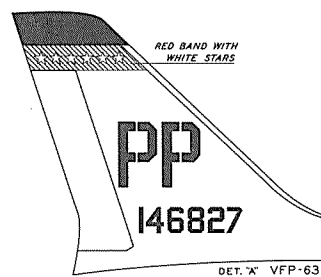
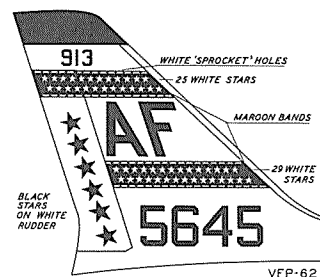
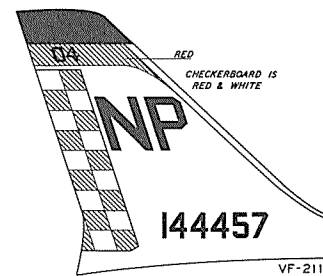
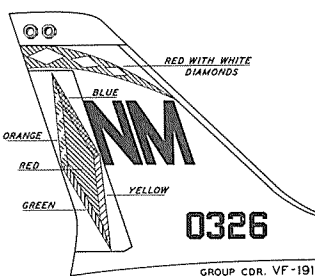
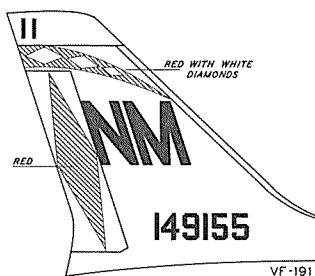
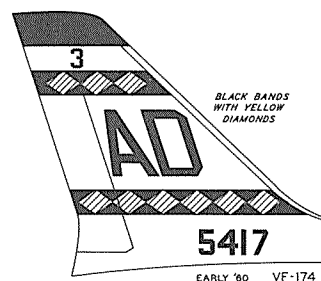
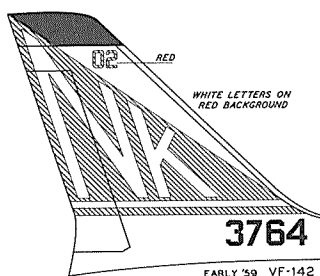
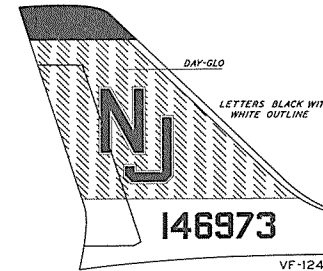
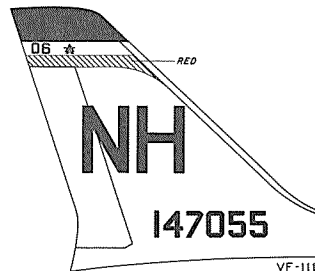
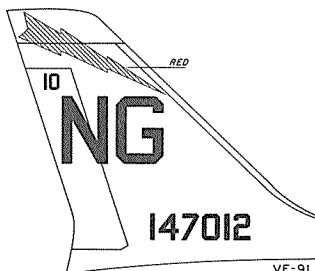
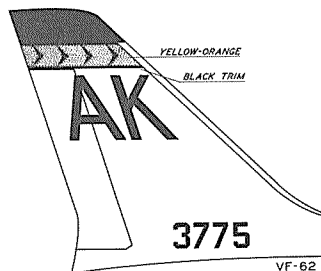
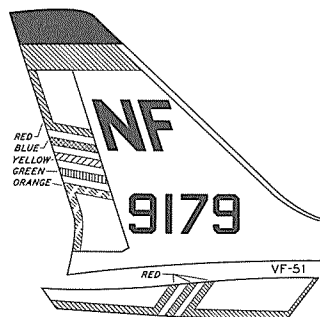
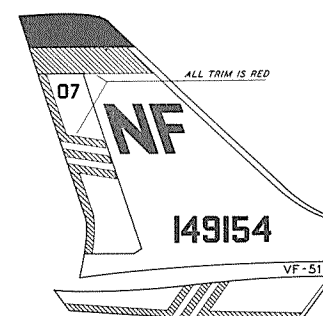
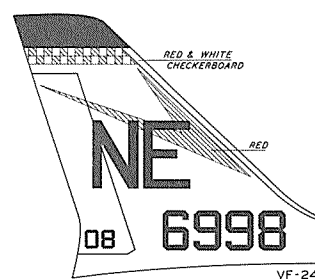
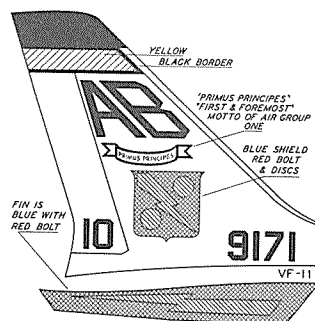
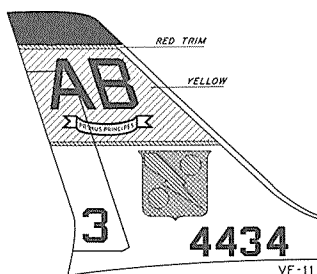
Tow target colors of VU-5, seen on F-8A, 143807, are midnight blue fuselage, yellow fin and wings. (Unknown)



Aboard the USS Ranger is the Crusader F-8C, BuNo 145581, of VF-91, Air Group 9. (Photo - Hal Andrews, Offl. USN)

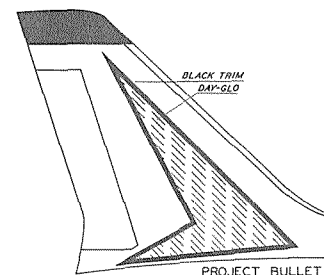
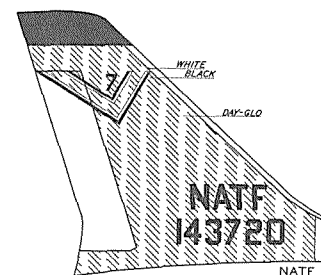
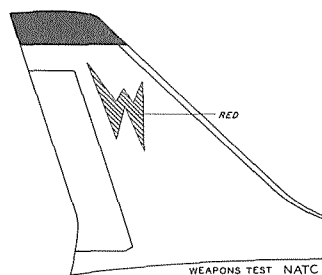
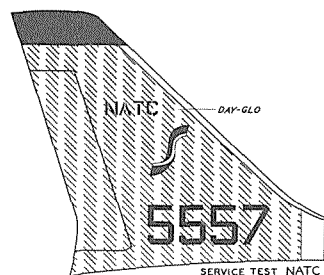
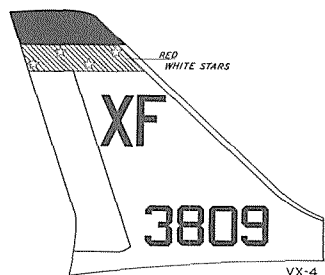
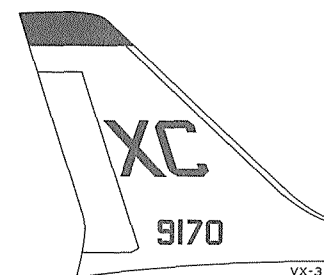
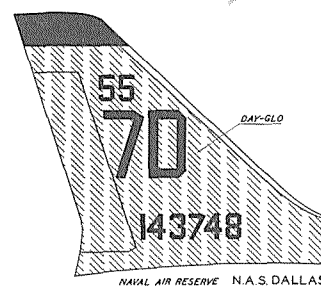
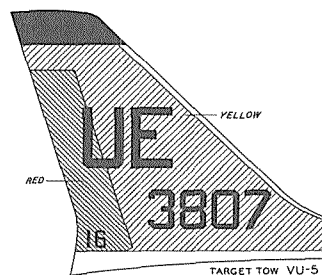
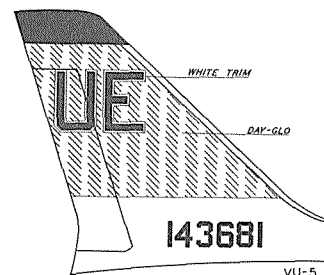
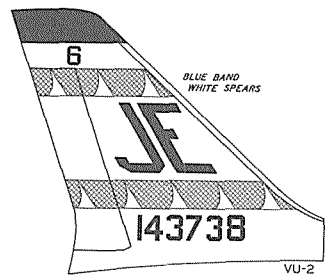
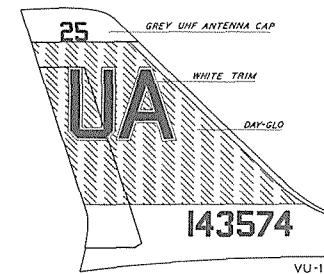
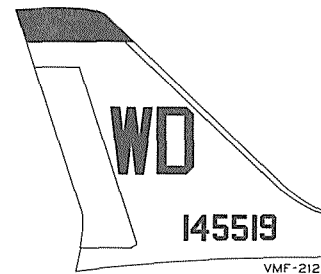
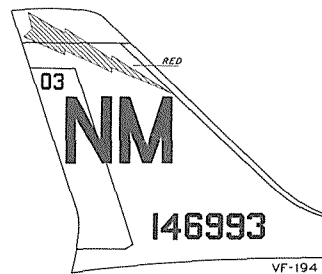
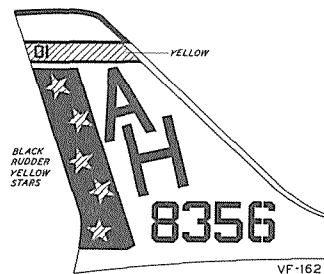
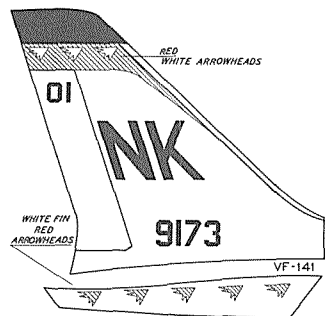
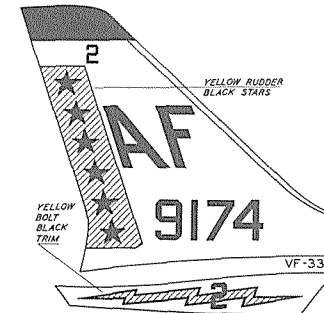
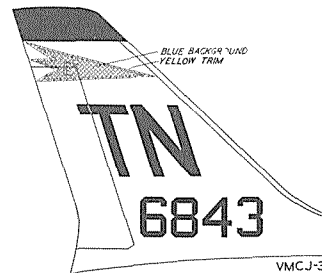
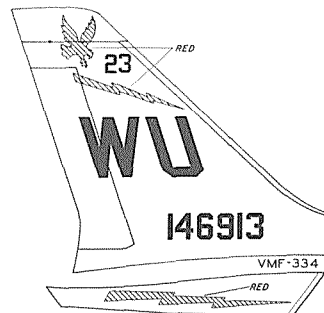
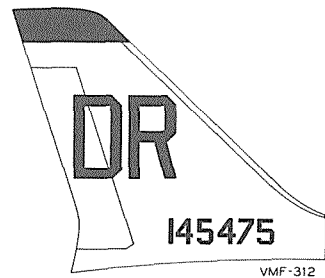
Crusader De-Tails

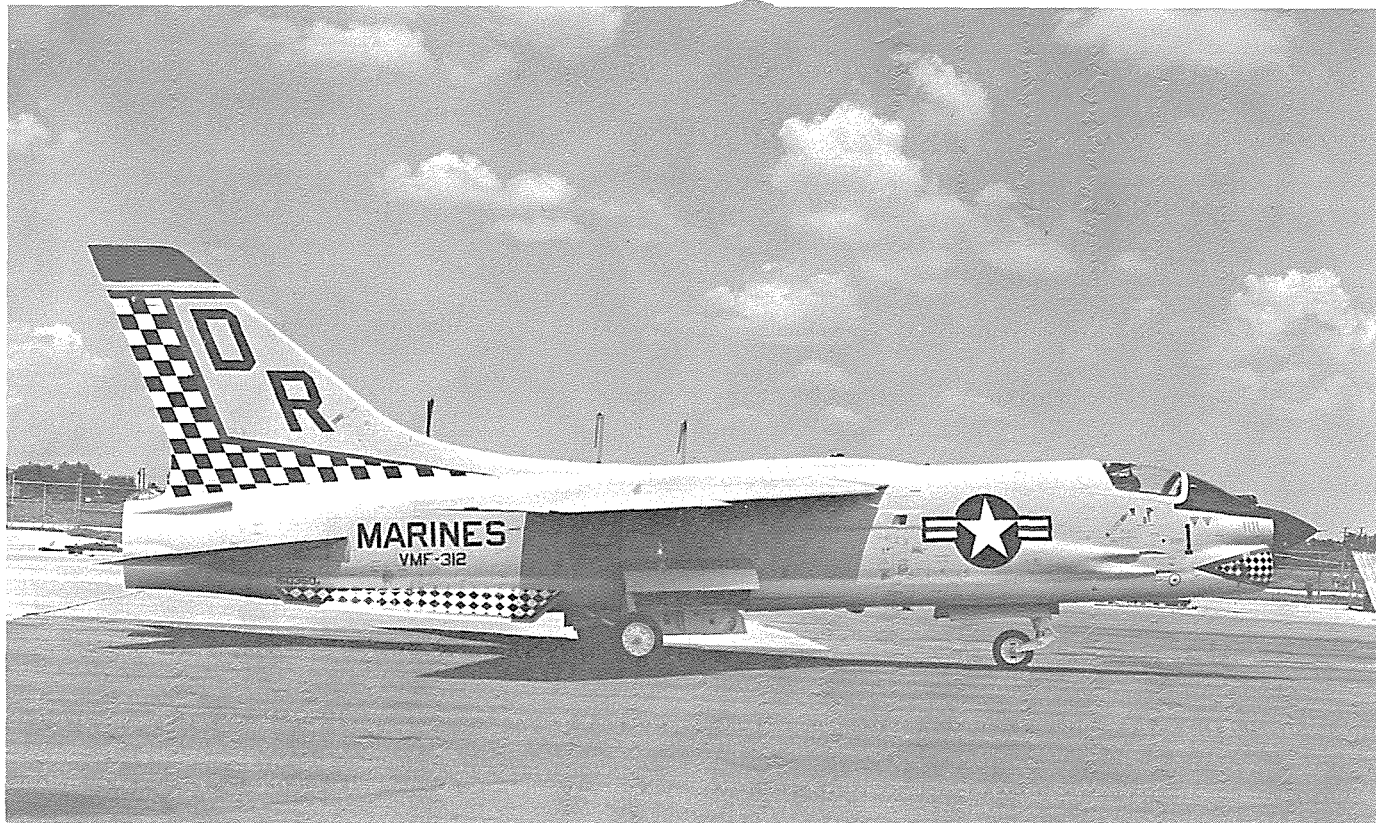
Changes in Squadron Markings



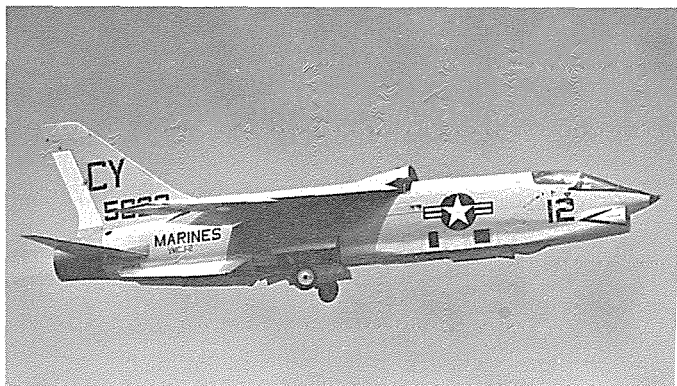
Crusader De-Tails

Additional Markings

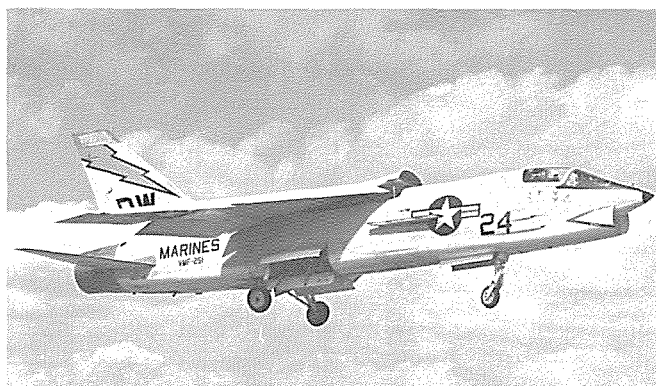




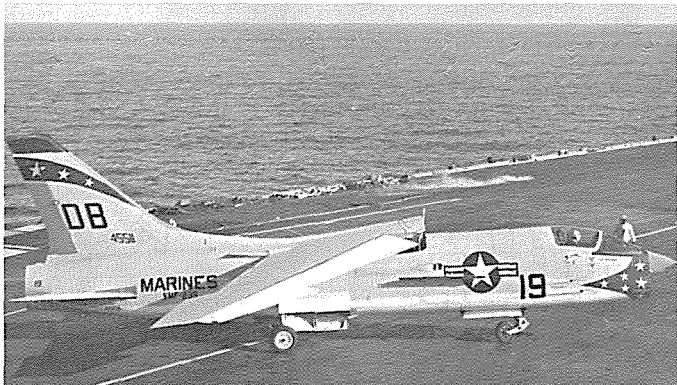
The Vought Crusader F-8E belonging to the Commanding Officer of VMF-312. It carries the squadron's black and white checkerboard with red and yellow outer striping. (Photo - Art Schoeni, Chance Vought, Offl. USN)



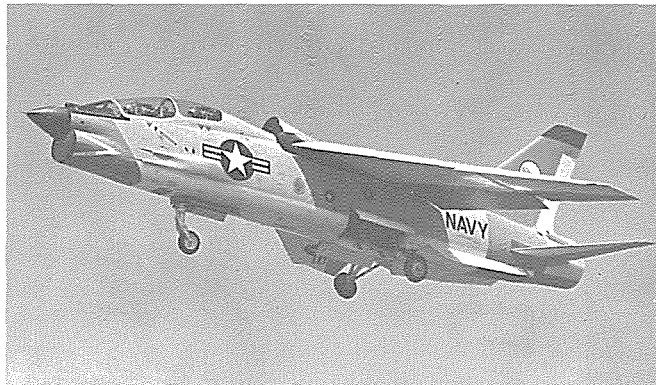
An RF-8A of VMCJ-2, 145623, with new ventral fins added for stability in photo missions. (Photo - Schoeni)



Crusader F-8A, 143756, with day-glo lightning flash and black border of VMF-251. (Photo - Schoeni)



On board the USS Independence, as an F8U-1, is this Crusader, 145511, of VMF-235. (Photo - Hal Andrews)



The standard trainer version of the Crusader, the TF-8A, with day-glo tail, nose and outer wings. (Schoeni)